



CITY OF ATLANTA

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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SHIRLEY FRANKLIN
MAYOR

James E. Shelby
Deputy Commissioner

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

What a great year! On behalf of the City of Atlanta and the Department of Planning and Community Development I would like to thank you for your support, suggestions, and patience as we worked throughout the year to improve many of our internal processes, policies and services we provided you. As Deputy Commissioner, I pledge that our work will continue in 2006. This letter serves to highlight and recap several new initiatives we created last year to better serve our residents, business and community partners of Atlanta. I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce to you our new Commissioner, Steven R. Cover who joined our team in January.

We are thrilled about the new changes and improvements that have been made within the Department over the last 12 months and are committed to bringing you, our friends and partners, a more responsive and effective department as we take the level of service we offer to new heights.

As Mayor Shirley Franklin begins her second term in office, she has outlined several new priorities. One of Mayor Franklin's initiatives focuses on improving the quality of life in neighborhoods all over Atlanta. With that in mind, work has already begun to beautify major corridors within the city. Another top priority is to create 10-thousand new affordable, workforce housing units in Atlanta by the year 2009. And the new Beltline Project is something we are all looking forward to helping make a reality.

2005 brought many successes to Atlanta in terms of community development. Last year, we saw the nation's newest and largest aquarium open in downtown Atlanta. Before that, we celebrated the opening a major, mixed use development called, Atlantic Station. This project is now a "national model" for development of so-called, "brown fields" into thriving urban economic developments.

Our efforts to building a more responsive and effective government will continue. To that end our department has launched two new departmental initiatives that offer quality customer service to our customers. Perhaps the most notable improvement came with the restructuring of our permitting process for developers and builders.

Now in its second phase, the Online Permitting Project allows licensed contractors to apply and pay for residential plumbing, electrical, elevator and re-inspection permits that do **not** require plan review. In third quarter 2005, builders and developers were also able to submit an online application for electrical permits, as well as, request for electrical re-

inspections permits. Additionally, our residents can now apply for general repairs permits online. Other enhancements we have made include extended permitting office hours to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays; new permitting tracking procedures; and courier service to transfer plans between City of Atlanta departments. Due to the great demand for permitting services we have hired 13 new Bureau of Buildings staff members in an effort to offer better service to our customers. Please visit our City's website regularly for periodic updates (www.atlantaga.gov).

Our new Commissioner plans to continue our restructuring efforts to make our department more efficient. In addition to creating a new position called Deputy Commissioner of Special Projects, we have also filled two key management positions. We have a new Director of the Bureau of Buildings, Mr. Kiumars Siah, and a new Director of the Bureau of Planning, Ms. Alice Wakefield.

In 2005, we began implementing many of the initiatives in the City of Atlanta's New Century Economic Development Plan. Some of the major goals of the Plan include job growth, crime reduction, increasing inner city housing, increasing property tax revenues, and creating new parks and green space. Among other things, the Department of Planning and Community Development convened the new members of the City's Housing Task Force. This group is preparing to help guide the efforts to build new, affordable, workforce housing in Atlanta.

As you know, the next major planned development for Atlanta is the Beltline project. This proposed development will undoubtedly be the next catalyst for economic and community development bridging transit, nature trails, commercial and residential living with green space.

The Department of Planning and Community Development, which is divided into five major areas including: the Bureaus' of Buildings, Code Compliance, Planning, Housing, and the Atlanta Urban Design Commission unite to form a cohesive body committed to achieving our mission and vision. In conclusion, we look forward to working with you in 2006 and having your continued support as we move forward with our ambitious plans for the future.

Sincerely,

James E. Shelby
Deputy Commissioner